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Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 SP-02 USIA-15 AID-05 EB-08
NSC-05 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-07 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00
FRB-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06 LAB-04
SIL-01 AGRE-00 PA-02 /100 W
----------036873 300947Z /20
R 300900Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6586

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PASS COMMERCE FOR BED/OIM/J, BIEPR/IND/J, FOREIGN BUYER PROGRAM

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: BEXP, JA
SUBJECT: PROMOTION OF CONSUMER GOODS EXPORTS TO JAPAN: AMERICAN PRODUCTS PROMOTERS ASSOCIATION

REFS: (A) TOKYO 861, (B) TOKYO 1736, (C) TOKYO 2613, (D) STATE 70691

SUMMARY. PROMOTERS OF APPA EXPORT PROMOTION PROJECT HAVE ADVISED EMBASSY THAT FROM THEIR DISCUSSIONS IN U.S. WITH USDOC AND SHOW ORGANIZERS THEY BELIEVE ALL PARTIES AGREE ON MERIT OF PROGRAM AND ARE PREPARED TO IMPLEMENT CATALOG COLLECTION ACTIVITY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. JAPAN HOBBY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION HAS BEEN ADVISED BY U.S. COUNTERPART THAT USDOC WILL PROVIDE OFFICIAL LETTER TO ACCOMPANY U.S. HOBBY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION REQUEST TO MEMBERS THAT THEY SUPPLY CATALOGS. JAPAN INSTITUTE OF DISTRIBUTION RESEARCH PLANS TO BEGIN RECRUITING APPA MEMBERS FROM MAJOR JAPANESE RETAILERS, AND HOPES TO HAVE INITIAL CATALOGS FOR DISPLAY THIS SPRING. EMBASSY SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUSION IN USDOC LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH IN-
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DUSTRY RECRUITMENT EFFORTS ON U.S. SIDE ARE INCLUDED IN THIS MESSAGE, ALONG WITH PROPOSALS FOR MOVING APPA INTO OPERATIONAL PHASE. USDOC VIEWS REQUESTED ON SEVERAL POINTS, INCLUDING WHETHER APPA PROGRAM SHOULD BE PLACED WITHIN CONTEXT OF JOINT U.S.-JAPAN TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE.
END SUMMARY.

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1. EMBOFFS MET WITH MESSRS. TAKAGI, MIURA AND OTHERS FROM INSTITUTE OF DISTRIBUTION RESEARCH (IDR) TO DISCUSS WHAT STEPS SHOULD NOW BE TAKEN TO MOVE AMERICAN PRODUCTS PROMOTERS ASSOCIATION (APPA) PROGRAM INTO ACTIVE PHASE. REPORTS ON IDR MEETINGS WITH USDOC PERSONNEL AND THREE SHOW ORGANIZERS (CADDELL, HOUSTON HOBBY SHOW; ZAPFEL, CHICAGO NHMA SHOW; AND YOUNGBLOOD, CHICAGO NATIONAL SPORTING GOODS ASSN. SHOW) WERE VERY POSITIVE. EMBASSY AND IDR BELIEVE THESE SHOWS ARE THOSE BEST SUITED TO INITIAL APPA EFFORTS. IDR ANXIOUS TO BEGIN CATALOG COLLECTION PROGRAM ASAP IN ORDER TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON MOMENTUM OF INTEREST RAISED BY RECENT JAPAN IMPORT PROMOTION MISSION, AND ALSO TO COINCIDE WITH IDR'S APPA RECRUITMENT EFFORTS AMONG JAPANESE RETAILERS. TAKAGI ALSO EXPLAINED THAT NEW ORGANIZATION, PATTERNED AFTER U.S. NATIONAL RETAIL MERCHANTS ASSN., WILL BE INAUGURATED MAY 15, AND IDR WISHES TO TIE APPA PROGRAM WITH THIS NEW ORGANIZATION.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT USDOC IS PREPARED TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH SHOW ORGANIZERS ON CATALOG COLLECTION PROGRAM, AND SEND RECRUITMENT PACKAGE TO INDIVIDUAL U.S. MANUFACTURERS REQUESTING THEIR PARTICIPATION. FEBRUARY 24 LETTER FROM WALTER CADDELL, EXEC. DIR. HOBBY INDUSTRY OF AMERICA TO HIS JAPAN COUNTERPART (MIURA) STATES "I HAVE HAD CONTACT WITH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE ON THIS SUBJECT AND IT APPEARS THAT THEY WILL PROVIDE AN OFFICIAL
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LETTER TO BE ENCLOSED WITH MY MAILING." OUR PROPOSALS FOR POINTS EMBASSY BELIEVES SHOULD BE CONTAINED IN OFFICIAL LETTER TO BE USED IN PACKAGE ARE GIVEN BELOW.

3. EMBASSY PROPOSED FOLLOWING POINTS FOR USDOC CONSIDERATION IN PREPARING LETTER TO U.S. MANUFACTURERS MENTIONED PARA. 2 ABOVE.

- (A) OUR EMBASSY IN TOKYO REPORTS THAT INTEREST IN
- AMERICAN PRODUCTS IS STRONG IN JAPAN.
- U.S. GOODS HAVE GENERALLY HIGH QUALITY IMAGE AMONG
- JAPANESE CONSUMERS.

- (B) JAPANESE ATTENDANCE AT U.S. CONSUMER GOODS TRADE
- SHOWS IS GOOD. JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN VISITING
- U.S. SO FAR THIS YEAR UNDER COMMERCE'S FOREIGN
- BUYER PROGRAM HAVE BEEN ENTHUSIASTIC PURCHASERS
- OF WIDE VARIETY OF AMERICAN DURABLE AND NON-
- DURABLE CONSUMER ITEMS, AS WAS ALSO RECENT
- JAPAN IMPORT PROMOTION MISSION.

- (C) APPRECIATION OF YEN IS HELPING U.S. EXPORTERS

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- AND SHOULD REDUCE RETAIL PRICE OF U.S. IMPORTS
- FOR CONSUMER.

- (D) WHAT JAPANESE RETAILER NEEDS IS INFORMATION
- ON U.S. PRODUCTS--WHAT PRODUCTS ARE AVAILABLE
- FROM WHOM, AT WHAT PRICES, AND HOW EXPEDITIOUS
- SHIPMENTS CAN BE MADE MOST DIRECTLY SO AS TO
- CUT HIGH COSTS OF MULTI-LAYERED DISTRIBUTION
- SYSTEM.

- (E) U.S. EMBASSY AND JAPANESE RETAILER ORGANIZATION
- HAVE ORGANIZED FACILITY DESIGNED TO PROVIDE
- THIS INFORMATION THROUGH TIMELY AND CONTINUOUS
- FLOW OF MANUFACTURERS' CATALOGS FROM U.S. TO
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- JAPAN.

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R 300900Z MAR 78
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PASS COMMERCE FOR BED/OIM/J, BIEPR/IND/J, FOREIGN BUYER
PROGRAM

- (F) KNOWN AS AMERICAN PRODUCTS PROMOTERS ASSOCIATION,
- THIS ORGANIZATION WILL BE STANDING BY TO
- ASSIST JAPANESE BUYERS PLACE ORDERS AND/OR
- ORGANIZE BUYING TRIPS TO U.S.

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- (G) AMERICAN MANUFACTURER CAN GET MUCH VALUABLE
- PUBLICITY FOR HIS PRODUCTS IN WORLD'S SECOND
- LARGEST CONSUMER ECONOMY SIMPLY BY PROVIDING
- A FEW CATALOGS FOR USE IN APPA PROGRAM.

- (H) BY DOING SO, MANUFACTURER HAS OPPORTUNITY TO
- BEGIN OR INCREASE HIS SALES TO JAPAN AND HELP
- TO TURN AROUND U.S.-JAPAN TRADE IMBALANCE.

- (I) APPA HAS BEEN SET UP AS A LONG TERM PROGRAM,
- AND CAN BE SUCCESSFUL ONLY IF AMERICAN
- MANUFACTURERS ARE WILLING TO KEEP INFORMATION
- ABOUT THEIR NEW PRODUCTS FLOWING IN; JAPANESE
- CONSUMER TASTES ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING AND IT
- IS THE PRODUCT WITH THE NEWEST DESIGN, LATEST
- TECHNOLOGY AND MOST IMAGINATIVE APPLICATION

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- THAT HAS THE BEST SALES POTENTIAL.

4. DURING DISCUSSIONS WITH IDR, SUBJECT OF PRESS KIT USED BY NHMA SHOW EXHIBITORS WAS RAISED. THIS INCLUDES PRODUCT LITERATURE, PHOTOGRAPHS AND OTHER INFORMATION WHICH PROSPECTIVE BUYERS SEEK, AND MAY BE, IN SOME CASES, BETTER PROMOTIONAL VEHICLE THAN CATALOG ALONE. SUGGEST USDOC MAY WISH TO DISCUSS THIS TOPIC WITH MR. ZAPFEL FURTHER.

5. WE HAVE EXPLORED INFORMALLY IDEA OF PLACING APPA WITHIN CONTEXT OF TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE (TFC), UNDER ITS TIRMS OF REFERENCE ITEM 4, IN ORDER TO (1) GIVE APPA MORE STATUS AS EXPORT PROMOTION VEHICLE, AND (2) TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION OF JETRO AND MITI WHO, WE UNDERSTAND, HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THIS PROJECT. WE WOULD APPRECIATE USDOC VIEWS ON THIS POINT ESPECIALLY.

6. WE HAVE AS YET MADE NO DETERMINATION ON WHEN OR HOW TO DISSEMINATE FORMATION OF APPA PROGRAM TO NEWS MEDIA. SOME INITIAL INTEREST FROM JAPANESE TRADE PRESS WAS EXPRESSED PRIOR TO VISIT BY IDR GROUP TO U.S. WE HAVE ASKED IDR FOR THEIR IDEAS ON THIS POINT, AND WOULD APPRECIATE USDOC VIEWS ON WHEN CATALOG PROJECT WILL BE FAR ENOUGH ALONG TO MAKE FORMAL, PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. EMBASSY WILL FOLLOW UP WITH IDR ON THESE AND OTHER QUESTIONS. MANSFIELD

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